

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 039937

EXDIS TOSEC 178 TODEP 62

FOLLOWING MOSCOW 2859 SENT ACTION STATE INFO COLOMBO NEW
DELHI FEB 27 RPT TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2859

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PARM, UR, US

SUBJECT: U.S.-SOVIET NAVAL RESTRAINT IN INDIAN OCEAN

REF: A. MOSCOW 2837

B. STATE 37742

1. PROMINENCE ACCORDED DIEGO GARCIA IN SOVIET PRESS
AND ARBATOV'S RE-FLOATING OF 1971 DOBRYNIN IDEA THAT
THERE MIGHT BE SOVIET INTEREST IN INDIAN OCEAN NAVAL
LIMITATIONS (REF A) ARE SUFFICIENTLY INTRIGUING THAT
IT WOULD APPEAR WORTHWHILE FOR US TO SMOKE THE SOVIETS
OUT ON THIS ISSUE. SINCE WE ARE PPREPARED TO TELL
LITTORAL STATES THAT U.S. REMAINS WILLING TO CONSIDER
U.S.-SOVIET NAVAL RESTRAINT IN INDIAN OCEAN AREA
(REF B), TELLING THE SOVIETS THE SAME THING WOULD
CONSTITUTE BOTH A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE REBUKE
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IMPLIED IN PRAVDA'S OBSERVER PRONOUNCEMENT AND A MEANS
OF ENHANCING OUR CREDIBILITY WITH INDIAN OCEAN STATES.

2. THERE ARE DISADVANTAGES TO SUCH A PROBLE. PEKING

WOULD LIKELY BE SUSPICIOUS. IF DISCUSSIONS ENSUED,
SOVIETS WOULD PROBABLY USE THEM TO ARGUE AGAINST
DIEGO GARCIA. BUT THERE MAY ALSO BE ADVANTAGE IN
DISCUSSING WITH SOVIETS LIMITATIONS ON THE PRESENCE OF
SHIPS (AS OPPOSED TO INSTALLATIONS) IN THE AREA, AS
WELL AS THE IMAGE-BUILDING ADVANTAGES DESCRIBED IN
PARA 1.

3. IF DEPARTMENT BELIEVES SUCH A PROBE WORTHWHILE,
THE SUBJECT COULD BE BROACHED DURING MY COURTESY CALL
ON APPROPRIATE SOVIET OFFICIAL.

4. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS.
STOESSEL UNQUOTE CASEY

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